

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

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September 8, 2023

VIA ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION

Ms. Hilary Axam
National Human Trafficking Coordinator
U.S Department of Justice

Ms. Kristina Rose
Director, Office for Victims of Crime
U.S. Department of Justice

Dear Ms. Axam and Ms. Rose:

The Committee on Oversight and Accountability continues to investigate whether the Department of Justice (DOJ or Department) is upholding the rights of victims who were sexually exploited by Robert Hunter Biden (Hunter Biden). On July 25, 2023, the Committee requested information regarding DOJ’s handling of victims’ rights in the Hunter Biden investigation and sought a briefing related to the Crime Victims Fund.¹ Four weeks have passed since the deadline, and DOJ has failed to respond to the Committee.

DOJ’s decision to ignore the Committee’s request runs afoul of its own policies in the Justice Manual. The agency’s policies clearly state, “it is important that the Department provide *timely* responses to congressional inquiries”² Unfortunately, DOJ’s leadership continues to apply unwritten exceptions to its own rules and policies when the Bidens are involved. This is despite White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre insisting that the Biden Administration will “always—of course urge—urge different agencies and departments to—you know, to—to work with Congress. Of course, that is something that we will always urge.”³

¹ See Letter to Ms. Hilary Axam, Nat’l Human Trafficking Coord., U.S. Dep’t of Just., and Ms. Kristina Rose, Dir. Off. for Victims of Crimes, U.S. Dep’t of Just., from James Comer, Chairman, H. Comm. on Oversight and Accountability (Jul. 25, 2023).

² See Justice Manual 1-8.210 – Responding to Congressional Requests Generally (emphasis added).

³ Press Briefing by Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre and Director of the Office of Public Engagement Stephen Benjamin, THE WHITE HOUSE (Aug. 28, 2023), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/press-briefings/2023/08/28/press-briefing-by-press-secretary-karine-jean-pierre-and-director-of-the-office-of-public-engagement-stephen-benjamin/>.

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Indeed, on August 17, 2023, after DOJ failed to respond to our letter, Committee counsel informed DOJ staff that we did not receive a response.⁴ DOJ staff confirmed receipt of the Committee's letter and represented that DOJ "will send a response as soon as we are able."⁵ Three weeks have passed since that email, and the Committee has received no further correspondence from DOJ.

It is unclear to the Committee as to why you both made the alarming decision to ignore our original request. This conduct is unprofessional and concerning given your leadership roles at DOJ. Considering the seriousness of this obstructive behavior, we request information as to whether anyone advised you not to respond to our inquiry, including *any* Department employee at the U.S. Attorney's Office in Delaware, DOJ Office of Legislative Affairs (OLA), Main Justice, or the White House.

DOJ receives millions of dollars in its annual budget to assist crime victims, but the Department has decided to show a complete disregard to a Congressional inquiry on its spending of such funds. Specifically, we requested a briefing from Ms. Rose regarding the Crime Victims Fund budget to allow Congress to gain further insight into how the money is being allocated and utilized.⁶ Neither Ms. Rose nor OLA ever contacted Committee counsel to schedule a briefing. If Ms. Rose refuses to appear voluntarily for a briefing to discuss these issues, then she should inform the Committee of her decision by September 15, 2023.

Furthermore, testimony from an Internal Revenue Service whistleblower indicated that DOJ compiled a list of potential victims relating to an investigation of Hunter Biden for Mann Act violations.⁷ These women may be victims under the Crime Victims' Rights Act and may also be afforded mandatory restitution pursuant to the Mandatory Victim Restitution Act.⁸ In light of DOJ's refusal to communicate in a meaningful way with the Committee, we have great skepticism that DOJ has been adequately communicating with crime victims. Considering DOJ's public campaign purporting its commitment to prosecuting human trafficking and other sexual exploitation crimes, DOJ should respond to Congressional requests related to this issue in a timely and thorough manner.⁹

Since Hunter Biden's plea deal recently fell apart, we have altered our previous requests. Please provide the following information to the Committee by September 22, 2023:

⁴ Email from Staff, H. Comm. on Oversight and Accountability, to Staff, U.S. Dep't of Just. (August 17, 2023).

⁵ Email from Staff, U.S. Dep't of Just., to Staff, H. Comm. on Oversight and Accountability (August 17, 2023).

⁶ *Supra* fn. 1, at 8.

⁷ *See* Transcribed Interview of Case Agent, Internal Revenue Service, at 155.

⁸ *See* 18 U.S.C. § 3771; 18 U.S.C. § 3663A.

⁹ *See* Attorney General Merrick B. Garland, *National Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking*, U.S. Dep't of Just., at 3 ("The mere fact that a person is involved in a high-risk industry, such as an adult engaging in commercial sex acts, does not mean human trafficking has occurred. However, human trafficking cannot be addressed in isolation from other forms of exploitation and abuse.") (Jan. 2022).

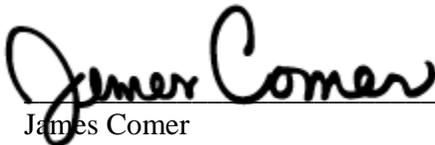
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1. Has anyone at the United States Attorney's Office for Delaware contacted anyone at DOJ regarding victim issues during the investigation of Hunter Biden?
2. Who at DOJ received the compiled list of women who were allegedly sexually exploited by Hunter Biden and what did those persons do with that information?
3. Have any victims been notified of their statutory rights related to the Hunter Biden investigation?
4. Does DOJ intend to confer with victims regarding any further steps taken in the case?
5. Will anyone from Special Counsel Weiss's office be responsible for conferring with these victims?
6. Did anyone at the Department or at the White House advise you not to respond to the Committee's letter dated July 25, 2023? If so, please provide their names.

The Committee on Oversight and Accountability is the principal oversight committee of the U.S. House of Representatives and has broad authority to investigate "any matter" at "any time" under House Rule X.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this important investigation.

Sincerely,



James Comer
Chairman
Committee on Oversight and Accountability



Marjorie Taylor Greene
Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable Merrick Garland
U.S. Attorney General

The Honorable David C. Weiss
U.S. Attorney for Delaware

The Honorable Jamie B. Raskin, Ranking Member
Committee on Oversight and Accountability